Changes in the Agenda.

Mr. President : According to the Agenda already supplied to the hon'ble members, the Agricultural Relief Bill as reported by the Select Committee has to be taken up for consideration on Monday. Monday and Tuesday have been allotted for that Bill, and Wednesday is the day for non-official business. But on account of some engagement I may not be present in the Council during the forenoon of Monday. I will be able to come in the afternoon. So, if it is the desire of hon'ble members that I should be present here during the discussion on the Agricultural Relief Bill, I would suggest that Monday may be taken as the non-official day and then we can take up the Agricultural Relief Bill on Tuesday. We can have the third reading also on Wednesday if it has the unanimous consent of the House not to postpone it to a subsequent day. Does the House agree to that proposal?

(The House agreed).

Mr. President : So a circular may be sent, so that members who are not present may know about it.

Voting of Demands for Grants.—*(cont.)*

22. Medical Rs. 4,94,902.

Dr. D. Raghavendra Rao *(Chief Medical Officer):* Sir, I rise to request the House for an allotment of Rs. 4,94,902 under "22—Medical" for the year 1115. In moving this motion it is not my desire to make an elaborate speech, because I find a series of cut motions. I don't wish to take up much time of the House. You will find that during the last several years I have been a great believer in solid silent work and have never tried to speak much about the doings of the Department here. But, as this is the last time that I am standing before this House for moving a budget demand, I wish to place certain salient features just to show the hon'ble members what the Government of Cochin has been doing during the last several years as my experience of the department runs over

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a pretty long period of very nearly 32 years. Several improvements have been effected to the different institutions under the sympathetic guidance of several Diwans of the State, *viz.* Sir P. Rajagopalachari, Sir Albion Bannerjee, Sir Vijayaraghavachari, Sir Joseph Bhore and the present Diwan. The several visits that they paid to the individual institutions, the keen sympathy that they showed for the suffering, these facts have been chiefly responsible for effecting the various improvements in the several institutions of the State. Hon'ble members have been bringing forward several cut motions, I am sorry to say, more with a parochial enthusiasm of improving the institutions in their own places. But they have not been able to grasp the extent of improvements that have been effected in all the institutions. It was my good fortune to take the members of the Advisory Committee two years ago to the several institutions and show them round some of the improvements that were effected in these institutions. No doubt, things perhaps may not be so rosy here as in the institutions of the west. Hospitals managed by the Government of Cochin may not hold very much comparison with institutions managed in England. But at the same time we must not fail to understand that it is the poor resources of a small State like Cochin that have to manage all these institutions, and we know full well how demand after demand has been rising before this House in various aspects for improving several things, roads, schools and so on. Therefore, it is but natural that the Government has to take stock of all its requirements and cut its coat according to the cloth. For the information of this House, I may just give a detailed description given in the Times Weekly Edition, of the West Minister Hospital which was opened recently by His Majesty the King Emperor. The cost of this was considerable and that amounted to 900 thousand pounds. But the whole of this amount was met by the goodwill of friends and subscribers. Not a single hospital in the West, very few, with the exception of hospitals that are intended for infectious diseases which are maintained by Borough Councils, is maintained by the Government. Almost all the big hospitals, teaching institutions, University hospitals, all are maintained out of public subscription. I fully concede that the people here are not industrial magnates like Lord Nuffield who has given to us at this distance an iron lung which is very useful. But still a time has come when the people should think of doing something of their own to supplement the resources of the Government and try to improve the institutions. Without this, as I will presently, show, it will not be possible for the Government of Cochin or any Government to continue at the rate at which it has been going is because the cry, to start a new institution where there is none, to have Government dispensaries where there are rural dispensaries, where there are Government dispensaries to have emergency wards, and where there

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are emergency wards to convert them into hospitals and when there is a hospital, to have more accommodation and more such things. Bricks cannot be burned without straw and without ample finance it is not possible to do these things. Criticisms may come and I welcome criticisms. Of course, those may not be very useful for me. Criticisms in the past have been mostly personal and I do not wish that I should dilate upon that.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* I take objection to that statement, Sir.

Dr. D. Raghavendra Rao *(Chief Medical Officer):* I say, to some extent.

Here are some of the facts. The State had two Assistant Surgeons before; at present on the paid establishment we have 16. The State had 11 Sub-Assistant Surgeons. At present we have 37.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* May I know the year of the first set of figures?

Dr. D. Raghavendra Rao *(Chief Medical Officer):* 1907 when I came. There was not a single nurse in the establishment of the Medical Department and we started training them. Government kindly ordered taking in 150 nurses and even now we hear the complaint that Dispensaries are not given nurses. Nurses cannot be trained in a day or two. It will take three years. It is only possible to take 10 in a year. The maximum that we can train is 12. We take these nurses, train them for three years and it is only in the course of time that we shall be in a position to give these nurses to the several institutions. As it is, at present, we have got about 140 nurses working in the several institutions. The total number of midwives working was 10 at that time. We have trained hundreds and at present on the paid establishment we have got 53. The number of compounders working at that time was 14. Now there are 52. The number of servants, wardboys, was only 45. Now the number is 257. The total number of medical men was 24. Now it is 58 paid men and about 52 on the honorary staff. The expenditure under Medicines in those days was only Rs. 19,000 for the whole of the Department. Today it has risen up to the collossal figure of 1 lakh and 6 thousand. Bedding and clothing—another item for which we used to spend Rs. 1,200. This year it is Rs. 8,500. Under Dietary Charges the amount was Rs. 5,500. Now it stands at Rs. 45,000. No doubt, we may argue that the diet that is given is very poor. But I shall just now show what a better diet would cost. Under Miscellaneous it was Rs. 2,000. Now it is about Rs. 9,000. The grand total was Rs. 70,000. But it has now risen to 5 lakhs and 25 thousands. Several other improvements have been effected and if we compare ourselves to other States—I have to

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inform this House that I had the good fortune of reading about the improvements to Hospitals in one of the Indian States which has been acclaimed as the most forward State in North India and with a total income of 80 lakhs the amount spent on this head is only two lakhs—we are far ahead in this matter. What I say is, on a reading of the cut motions, it would look to the outsiders that the Government of Cochin is not paying proper attention to the Medical Department. I don't want that impression to be spread about. It is due to the personal interest that was taken by my predecessors that all these improvements took place. I hope that things will improve in future also as the finances of the Government improve. In the Westminister Hospital with 400 beds, they want for their daily expenditure about 90 thousand pounds which works out nearly to 130 lakhs of rupees. If 130 lakhs is wanted for the maintenance of 400 beds, we must get 300 lakhs for we are having 800 beds. Can the Cochin State spend 300 lakhs? Then again Sir, the scale of pay that is being given to our menials is something which does not exist anywhere. Our servents were getting Rs. 5 without ever having a chance of getting a pension. Today their pay is Rs. 16 and 18. The pay of the nurses has been increased and the pay of the subordinate staff was increased due to the kindness of the Diwan and this one item will cost the State 75,000 rupees. It is high time that the public of Cochin think that these institutions are their own and that they ought to help them and come forward with gifts in the shape of buildings, in the shape of contributions to meet the other demands also. As I said, we had 10 hospitals and 5 dispensaries. Today we have 14 hospitals, 17 dispensaries, 7 itinerating dispensaries, 18 State-aided dispensaries. All these mean money. Taking the General Hospital itself into consideration, the land that was existing in the General Hospital was a small bit. That was extended first. The Central Medical Stores wherein medicines for a year or two could be stocked and eventually distributed to the several institutions was started at the cost of thousands of rupees. A pay-ward the like of which exists nowhere—it is the cheapest place for a man of ordinary means to go and get medical aid of the best sort—was opened. The Laboratory and the Animal House wherein the most intricate bacteriological tests can be made were built. The Nurses Quarters has also been built. I admit it is not spacious enough. Then there is the Sisters' Quarters. The Women's Ward which at present accommodates 150 beds was recently built. Children's Ward, Maternity Ward and the Radium Theatre, all these were constructed recently. I have to announce to the House that Radium was purchased and luckily we have been able to purchase much more radium than other institutions when the price was less. If we waited we would not have been able to get half the quantity. Now the deep X'ray

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building has been constructed. During the next few years, I am sure the present Diwan will be in a position to give us the Deep X'ray apparatus which will be a great addition to the Radium Treatment. Several improvements have been made in the existing buildings. The Flush system was introduced. The new out-patient departtment was constructed for men, women and children. Kitchen for the pay-wards has been constructed. Two new operation theatres of the latest fashion and a Linen Store have been constructed. There was a time when cholera, small-pox and other infectious diseases were treated in a small area. Now they have all been treated in a place constructed at a distance away from the town. Now take the Civil Hospital, Trichur into consideration. The Civil Hospital had a slumber for a short time. The reason is this. Much depends upon the enthusiasm of the Public as well as the Medical man in charge of it. When the Late Dr. Ravunni Menon was there, that hospital had improved to a higher standard than the hospital in Ernakulam, and having done that, it had to rest for a little while. Now this year we have constructed an additional ward, part of it has been completed and work will be started on the other half next year. I was glad to see that the constant visits of the Diwan to the place has improved certain items of details there, with the result, that it will put a much more presentable appearance than it would otherwise have been. Then there is the Maharaja's Hospital at Palluruthi. It is a beautiful institution built on most up to date lines which evoked the admiration of even Surgeon-General Wilson when he came here and he even deputed his staff to come and visit this institution which is a great credit to our Chief Engineer who has been able to do wonderful things in my department. In the Trichur Civil Hospital the number of beds has been increased. Modern appliances like the microscope have been supplied. We had not even a single microscope. At present there is not a single hospital without it and several dispensaries have been supplied with microscopes. Thanks to the methods we adopted in the purchase of medicines we have been able to supply operation tables and high pressure sterilisers to all hospitals. New appliances have been supplied to various departments. I don't say that these institutions are perfect. Nothing human is perfect in this world; but if anybody would come to the hospitals in the Cochin State and see the pulsating life in them and compare them with the idle nature of some of the institutions outside, I am sure they will be amply satisfied. There is not a single institution that has not undergone changes excepting perhaps the Kandakkadavu dispensary. Even the construction of the Vadakkancheri dispensary for which Mr. Ezhuthassan used to fight has already been started. As regards the Kandakkadavu dispensary, it was started about 32 years ago. It so happened that the site of that dispensary itself was shifted

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from place to place. At present it is located in a house which is situated in a strip of land bounded on the west by the sea and on the east by dirty canals. There is not a single building excepting this house which belongs to a Sait who refuses even to make the necessary repairs. The Government will have to find a suitable place. I don't think that the present location is a happy one. There are people from Kumbalangi who say that the dispensary should be shifted to that place. But people from the South say that it should be retained there. But ere long the Government will come to a decision and when other institutions have been completed it will also be taken up. The land acquisition for the Pazhayannur dispensary is over. I am sure that in the course of the next few years the medical institutions in the State will improve still further and I shall, during my retirement, be glad to note that all the work that has been carried on here is being appreciated by the suffering public of Cochin. There is no other place where medical aid can be got so cheaply and so efficiently as in Cochin today.

Cut Motion No. 1.

Abolishing the practice of taking money from patients by the hospital staff.

Mr. V. J. Mathai *(Planters):* Sir, I rise to move *to reduce the allotment of Rs. 35,328 for Hospitals, Salaries, by Re. 1—to discuss the necessity for abolishing the practice of taking money from patients in the hospitals by the hospital staff.* My point is this. Any patient who goes either as an out-patient or as an in-patient to any hospital in the State should not have to pay even a single pie to the staff or to the doctors in the hospital. I have nothing to do with those patients who get treatment outside the hospitals. For this service they ought to be amply paid and I don't stand in the way. I know that it is a matter of *mamool* to receive money from patients. I may say this: if money is given, a sort of preferential treatment is given. I had the good luck or ill luck to be in the hospital for about 60 days. Even otherwise I know that money is being taken by the lower staff, wardboys, the peons at the gates, the nurses and by all those one comes across in the hospital. For all services rendered some money is expected. The only exemption is the Head of the Department and possibly one or two Civil Surgeons. I may submit before this House that I am not actuated by any motive. The only object is to see that poor patients get equal treatment. With these few words I submit my motion to the acceptance of this House.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar *(Cheruthuruthi):* I support this motion. I do not propose to make a long speech. But I wish to say that every word that the hon'ble member said is true with

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